

DRAFT Minutes of the Reservoir Hill NCD and HD Study Committees—THIS DRAFT HAS NOT YET BEEN REVIEWED OR APPROVED

Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Cambridge Historical Commission (acting as a Historic District Study Committee) and the Reservoir Hill Neighborhood Conservation District Study Committee

April 13, 2016 – Walking tour in Reservoir Hill neighborhood - 5:00 P.M.

CHC Members present: Chandra Harrington, William King, Jo M. Solet, *Members*; Joseph Ferrara, *Alternate*

CHC Members absent: William Barry, Shary Page Berg, Bruce Irving, Robert G. Crocker, *Members*; Susannah Tobin, *Alternate*

RHNCD Study Comm. Members present: Peter Ellis, Robert Higgins, Arch Horst, and Bracebridge Young, with appointed CHC representatives Chandra Harrington and Joseph Ferrara

RHNCD Study Comm. Members absent: Susannah Tobin

Staff present: Charles Sullivan, *Executive Director*; Sarah Burks, *Preservation Planner*; Samantha Paull, *Preservation Administrator*

Public present: See attached list.

The members of the study committees met in the parking lot of the Armenian Church (rear of 141 Brattle Street) at 5:00 P.M.

Charles Sullivan led the walking tour of the neighborhood beginning with Brewster Street. The group toured Sparks, Highland, Appleton, Reservoir and Fayerweather streets. Mr. Sullivan remarked on the history of land owners, development, styles of architecture and notable residents.

The committee noted the geography of the area, size of lots, setbacks, and architectural features. Large scale renovations were noted at 77 Sparks Street, 1 Highland Street, 17 Highland Street, 24 Highland Street, 71 Appleton Street, 88 Appleton Street, 89 Appleton Street,

Mr. Sullivan explained his reasoning for excluding the cul de sacs from the study area. He said Clement Circle could have been included but it was so densely developed, very little could be built there without zoning relief. He noted new construction at 2 Hemlock Road and BB&N middle school's addition.

George Mabry of 77 Sparks Street asked how a contemporary house would be treated in a historic district. Mr. Sullivan explained the review process and how a district commission is tasked with determining what is appropriate to the age and style of a particular building or at least what is not incongruous. He noted that there were buildings from a wide time period located in the Old Cambridge Historic District. In a side conversation with Mr. Mabry, Mr. Sullivan indicated that 77 and 80 Sparks could probably be removed from the boundaries of a proposed district since they were on the edge of the study area and retained limited development potential since they had already had extensive modifications and additions.

Mr. Sullivan noted that the large retaining wall at 17 Highland Street appeared out of character with the neighborhood. He also noted that high fences at the front of some properties could have a negative impact on the pedestrian experience of the neighborhood. The grading and fences of the new house at 46 Fayerweather Street were one example.

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Several sites were noted where mid twentieth century modern houses had been located but were since demolished. Mr. Sullivan spoke about the history of the site of the Cambridge Reservoir. He noted that neither district designation nor landmark status could protect trees or house interiors, as had been the case at the Weld House of 28 Fayerweather Street. Only a preservation restriction could protect interior features. A new preservation restriction was being donated by the owner of 50 Fayerweather Street and included interior features of the house that had originally built as a stable and converted to a dwelling by Lois Lilley Howe.

Mr. Young moved to adjourn the meeting, which was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah L. Burks
Preservation Planner

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**Committee Members and Members of the Public
Who Signed In on April 13, 2016**

Jo M. Solet	15 Berkeley St
Mike Solet	15 Berkeley St
George Mabry	77 Sparks St
Annette LaMond	7 Riedesel Ave
Martha Bedell	5 Clement Cir
William King	25 Hurlbut St
Edward Kerslake	15 Woodbridge St
Brace Young	88 Appleton St
Cynthia Ellis	16 Highland St
Peter Ellis	16 Highland St
Bob Neer	9 Riedesel Ave
Esther Pullman	10 Ash Street Pl
John Gilmore	47 Reservoir St
Christopher Pullman	10 Ash Street Pl
Roger Stacey	59 Brewster St
Libby Halstead	25 Brewster St
Donna Stone	57 Brewster St
Foster Hinshaw	57 Brewster St
Jan Ferrara	195 Brattle St
Joe Ferrara	195 Brattle St
Marilee Meyer	10 Dana St
Chandra Harrington	123 Hancock St
Robert Higgins	1 Highland St
Arch Horst	55 Brewster St

Note: Town is Cambridge, unless otherwise indicated.